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INFORMATION USE AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR NON-ACADEMIC STAFF IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

The study surveyed information use and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities. Senior non-academic staff are responsible for the day-to-day operations and management of activities within the university. However, in the context of information use and job performance little or no evidence is found of any investigation done. Survey research design was employed to carry out the study; the population comprised 112 approved universities in Nigeria. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 27 universities that took part in the study. 1804 senior non-academic staff comprised the sample size of the study. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Out of 1804 questionnaire distributed, 1270 were completed and returned. Descriptive statistics such as frequency count, mean, standard deviation and correlation was used to present the data. The study established among others that information sources used by senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities were mostly online (internet, CD-ROM, etc.), print materials (books, journals, etc.); policy papers and subordinates in the office. Also, they found it easy accessing information from colleagues in the office, peers in the office and superiors in the office. Being in possession of information helped them to contribute meaningfully during group discussion and they easily pass on information to their co-workers that would help them to perform their work effectively. Hence, a positive relationship was found to exist between information sources used and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities. The study concluded that information use had positive relationship with job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities, and therefore recommends provision of and/or extension of current awareness services and selective dissemination of information to senior non-academic staff by information professionals specifically, librarians. This will avail them the opportunity of accessing current and job related information for their day-to-day activities.

Keywords: Information use, job performance, senior non-academic staff, Nigerian universities.

Word count: 298

Introduction

Information has been widely recognized in recent times as a survival input of man in the Information Age. It is one of the sources that keep the wheel of an organization tickling. Arguably, one cannot have knowledge unless one gets information. Information, according to Bystrom (2005) is considered as an abstract tool that enables a task to be completed. Effective use of information, according to Hwang (2011), is a critical contributor to an individual knowledge worker. Ajayi and Omirin (2007) believed that information needed for effective decision making in universities cannot be provided from people with deficient memories. Moreover, it is impossible to plan activities without effective information. Thus there is need for a systematic use of information to perform the work and evaluate the performance of an organization by employees including the non-academic staff of an institution.

The non-academic staff plays complementary roles, while the academic staff members are primarily involved in teaching, research and community services. The non-academic staff provides the required enabling environment to ensure achievement of success on the tasks embarked on by academic staff and the smooth running of these institutions. According to Madukoma and Opeke (2013), they are made up of the following divisions within the university: The Registry, Maintenance, Vice Chancellor's Office, Deputy Vice Chancellor's Office, Bursary, Grounds, Students Affairs, Human Resources/Establishment, Cafeteria, Security, Venture, Bookshop, among others and thus,

need information to carry out their duties. Hence this study focuses on information use and job performance of the Registry, Bursary, Human Resources and Students Affairs staff based on the fact that they are available in any established and operating university.

The registry staff of the university carry out duties such as conducting examinations, admission of students, keeping of archives reports, preparation/provision of transcripts, verification of results, producing schedule of classes, course action forms, name changes, prepare graduate academic records, among other duties. On the other hand, the bursary division takes care of financial administrative duties of the university, ensuring that university transactions are promptly executed, etcetera; the human resources department employs and sees to the welfare of the employees, while the students' affairs division of the university is responsible for programs and services that focus on students and their university experience; ensures accommodation, counseling, etcetera. Therefore, all the categories of staff mentioned above, will need information related to their particular duties.

Statement of the problem

Senior non-academic members of staff are a large and very important group of people in the university community. They are responsible for the day-to-day operations and management activities within the university. They perform managerial/supervisory roles, providing services to students and others who find their way into the institution and thus need information to perform their job effectively and efficiently. However, in the context of information use and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigeria, there is little or no evidence of any investigation done, of which the rationale could be that when discussing information needs, people usually think of faculty members and students

or top management offices in the organizations only. Many people do not seem to be aware that it can apply to their different professions that by nature are service oriented. This study thus, investigated the information use and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to survey the relationship between information use and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities. The specific objectives are to:

1. identify information sources used by senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities;
2. assess the level of ease associated with information access of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities;
3. ascertain the perceived influence of information use on job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities.

Hypotheses

- H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between information sources used and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities.

Literature Review

The concept of information

For employees to attain effective and efficient productivity in organizations, Ajiboye and Tella (2007) posit that this can only be achieved through regular use of information. Kumar and Kaur (2005) attest that adequate flow of information would

enhance human productivity and eradicate inefficiency among individuals and in organizations. Hence Popoola (2006) defined information as facts, ideas, opinions, news, messages, symbols, sounds, codes, databases, images, and processed data that are capable of improving the knowledge state of the user. Aguolu (1998) believes that information helps people to react knowledgeably in making decisions and performing their duties effectively and efficiently. To Jorosi (2006), information is a strategic weapon for use by managers to carry out their duties. This implies that the importance of information cannot be over emphasized.

Information sources of senior non-academic staff

Hayes (1990) contends that non-faculty members on campuses are responsible for an increasingly wide range of activities requiring information sources on topics as diverse as regulations, fund raising, financial services, counseling, safety, building maintenance, personnel management, and etcetera. Information sources, according to Lawal (2007), are stored in various media, print and non-print, namely: books, journals, newspapers, computers, databanks, cassettes, discs, tapes, etcetera and it is transmitted by printing or orally, audio-visually, telegraphically, electronically, etcetera. It is important that senior non-academic staff access and use information from these sources in order to be effective in their jobs. On the other hand, Bystrom (2006) focused on the role of task complexity in the use of information type and sources. He argued that when a task is perceived to be more complex, people tend to rely on experts as a source of information. According to Fiedler, Lash, Wong and Tiainen (2006), individuals can seek information from a variety of sources, and these sources convey information in a variety of ways. These include personal sources of information which include peers, direct supervisors, and experienced

coworkers, superiors other than their direct supervisor, subordinates, support personnel, and individuals external to the organization. They stated that prior research indicates that experienced peers and direct supervisors are the most frequently accessed sources of information. They also posit that other non-personal sources include electronic, written, or task-generated information. Apparently, instant access to information from multiple sources facilitates information utilization for improved productivity and decision making of senior non-academic staff.

Agarwal, Xu and Poo (2011) and Almutairi (2011) attest that people get information from multiple sources, such as friends and colleagues, books and online sources, and do not necessarily depend on a single source. They believe that it is important to have the knowledge of how a person seeks information in an organizational setting. It can help to ensure that employees have easy and unhindered access to their preferred information sources in carrying out their day-to-day tasks. Hence, Haliso and Okunfulure (2010) established a positive relationship between utilization of information and job performance of workers in MTN Ibadan Nigeria.

Information use and job performance of senior non-academic staff

Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande (1992) defined information use as the extent to which information influences the user's decision making, either when performing their job or in another activity. Davenport, De Long and Hwang (2011) stated that measuring effective use of information by an employee and understanding its effect on performance is a critical requirement, thus, success depends on the ability of employees to use information to act on customer feedback and to be more responsive in service delivery. Jorosi (2006) stated that through the use of information, top managers in organizations are

able to reactively and pro-actively adapt their organizations to environmental changes in order to survive and prosper. He affirmed that some writers suggest a direct link between information and improved job performance. Popoola (2007) also attest that managers who use information are likely to be fast trackers as they set pace for their team and peers and productivity is greatly enhanced when information is used in job performance.

Wilkins and Leckie (1997) affirmed that the job of the managerial staff (senior non-academic staff) of the university are multifaceted and complex, these staff members are frequently engaged in longer-term activities such as project development, report writing, thereby requiring more intensive information use. Further, they perform managerial/supervisory roles, providing services to students, administrative work, technical/computer support services, marketing and development, building and maintenance, health and safety services, personnel management, etcetera. They noted that they will need information on professional literature, internal university information, technical literature/manuals, suppliers' information, general management literature, government regulation, trade publication, market research information, and etcetera.

Bradley (2009) established in her study that non-academic staff of the university utilized mostly the internet sources with 81%, employees and colleagues with 72%, while library rated lowest with 14.5% and print materials (books, journals, newspapers, reports, etc.) had 12.5%. From the foregoing review, it is obvious that senior non-academic staff could seek information from different sources available and accessible to them. According to Hwang, Kettinger and Yi (2010), employees' use of information motivates and influences job performance. Many senior non-academic staff are subject to threat of competition rendering from external and internal environment. This is the reason they

should utilize information of various sources to be more equipped as information use provide increase in quality of work, increase in quantity of work, reduced need for close supervision, confident, flexible staff with low turnover, high staff morale and, job satisfaction among others.

Job performance of senior non-academic staff

Johari and Yahya (2009) opined that a growing emphasis has been given to employee's job performance as a source of competitive advantage to promote responsiveness in enhancing overall organizational effectiveness. They defined performance as the level of an individual's work achievement after having exerted effort. On the other hand, Muchinsky (2003) defined job performance as the set of workers' behaviour that can be monitored, measured, and assessed achievement at individual level. These behaviours are also in agreement with the organizational goals. While Saetang, Sulumnad, Thamppitak and Sungkaew (2008), view job performance as a human behaviour which the result is an important factor for individual work effectiveness evaluation. This view implies that organizations' success or failure is dependent on job performance of the individuals in that organization.

Vroom (2000) stated that performance of a person on a job can be considered as a function of two different variables. One of these refers to the ability or skill of the individual to perform the job; and the second refers to his motivation to use this ability or skill in the actual performance of the job. In this regard, Madukoma and Popoola (2012) affirmed that performance becomes the product of information accessed and effectively applied on the job for maximum productivity. Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy (2007),

Hakala (2008), and Shadare and Hammed (2009) gave the following among performance indicators: quality of work, quantity, timeliness, cost effectiveness, creativity, innovation, adherence to policy, personal appearance/grooming, management by objectives, etcetera. Consequently, Wall et al (2004) assert that job performance has become one of the significant indicators in measuring organizational performance in many studies. Even though performance is oftentimes determined by financial figures, it can also be measured through the combination of expected behaviour and task-related aspects (Motowidlo, 2003), like the use of information, which could as well be used to measure senior non-academic staff job performance.

Hwang, Kettinger and Yi (2010) posit that the use of information motivates and influences job performance. Bradely (2009) also noted that many of the non-academic staff plays major roles in advising students on information on other needs such as course selection, career success, etcetera, while others make significant decisions that affect the direction of the institution as a whole. Wu (2011) notes, that a worker uses documents to understand a task's related topics and solve a specific problem. When a worker begins a task, he/she may search the organization's knowledge repository for information that will help solve the problem at hand. Popoola (2006) also attests that in an organizational setting, managers are saddled with the responsibility of efficient allocation of resources for optimal profit or improved productivity. Hence he stressed that the greatest challenges that managers often face in accomplishing this goal is how to access and use information for optimal factors combination. In the same vein, senior non-academic staff in their various departments is faced with complex tasks. Therefore, they need to access and utilize information for optimal productivity.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study population comprised 112 approved universities in Nigeria by National Universities Commission (NUC, 2011). Multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 27 universities that took part in the study, while 1804 senior non-academic staff was randomly selected as the sample size for the study. Structured questionnaire was the instrument employed for data collection. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count, mean and standard deviation while correlation was used to analyze the hypothesis.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1: Distribution of Participants Based on Age

Age cohort (in years)	F	%
20-30	110	8.7
31-40	577	45.4
41-50	535	42.1
51 and above	48	3.8
Total	1270	100.0

Table 1 reveals that 1270 participants were involved in this study, out of which those that were between 20 to 30 years was 8.7%; those between 31 to 40 years was 45.4%; those between 41 to 50 was 42.1% and those that were above 50 years 3.8%. This implies that majority of the participants were between 31 to 50 years, indicating that the workforce tend to be relatively young.

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	F	%
Male Respondents	565	44.5
Female Respondents	705	55.5
Total	1270	100.0

Table 2 revealed that there were more female participants (55.5%) than male participants (44.5%) in the study. This result could mean that senior non-academic staff were more of female in most universities in Nigeria, or it could as well be that female respondents were willing and more open to respond to the questionnaire than their male counterparts.

Table 3: Distribution of the Non-academic Staff by Department

Department	F	%
Registry	527	41.4
Students' Affairs	288	22.8
Bursary	277	21.8
Human resources/Establishment	178	14.0
Total	1270	100.0

Table 3 shows that out of the total non-academic staff involved in this study, 41.4% were working in the Registry; 22.8% were in the Student Affairs, 21.8% were in Bursary and 14% were in Human Resources Department. This finding shows that the largest number (41.4%) of non-academic staff in Nigerian universities is likely to be found in the registry. This is not surprising since university registry oversees many key aspects of university administration such as students' admission, students' registration, conduct of examinations, verification of results, course action form, and preparation of students' transcripts and transfer among other duties.

In order to find out information sources utilized by senior non-academic staffs, the respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they use the following as sources of information on their job. This is shown in table 4.

Table 4: Showing Information Sources Used by Non-academic Staff in Nigeria Universities

S/N	STATEMENT	Effectively Utilized	Moderately Utilized	Inadequately Utilized	Not Utilized	MEAN	STD.D
1	Online (internet, CD-ROMs, etc.)	370 (29.0)	501 (39.5)	204 (16.1)	172 (13.6)	2.81	1.06
2	Print material (books, journals, etc.)	316 (24.9)	406 (31.9)	440 (34.7)	108 (8.5)	2.73	.93
3	Policy papers	302 (23.8)	445 (35.0)	418 (32.9)	89 (7.0)	2.73	.94
4	Subordinates in my office	268 (21.1)	471 (37.0)	437 (34.5)	78 (6.2)	2.71	.91
5	Library	223 (17.5)	552 (43.5)	389 (30.6)	106 (8.4)	2.70	.85
6	Peers in my office	223 (17.6)	501 (39.4)	474 (37.3)	56 (4.4)	2.68	.86
7	Radio	347 (27.3)	373 (29.4)	357 (28.1)	177 (14.0)	2.67	1.06
8	Peers outside my office	232 (18.3)	569 (44.8)	268 (21.1)	185 (14.5)	2.64	.98
9	Colleagues in my office	381 (29.9)	287 (22.6)	404 (31.9)	121 (9.6)	2.61	1.18
10	Subordinates outside my office	145 (11.4)	606 (47.8)	3400 (31.4)	67 (7.66)	2.60	.85
11	Television	282 (22.3)	379 (29.8)	403 (31.7)	206 (16.2)	2.58	1.01
12	Superior in my office	355 (27.9)	308 (24.2)	353 (27.9)	184 (14.5)	2.55	1.19
13	Superiors outside my office	227 (17.8)	461 (36.3)	454 (35.8)	59 (4.7)	2.56	1.01
14	Colleagues outside my office	224 (17.6)	412 (32.5)	460 (36.2)	97 (7.6)	2.48	1.06

Table 4 reveals the extent to which the senior non-academic staff members in the universities utilize the available information sources. With all the mean scores approximated to 3, it shows that they moderately utilize the sources available to them. The most common sources utilized are online (mean = 2.81), Print materials (mean = 2.73), policy paper (mean = 2.73), library (mean = 2.70), and subordinates in the offices (mean = 2.70). While superiors outside the office, television, superiors in the offices and colleagues outside the offices do not figure prominently as information sources moderately utilized by the respondents. This finding is not surprising in view of the fact that the respondents are likely to utilize sources available and accessible to them. In line

with this finding is Agarwal, Xu and Poo (2011) further established in their study that people get information from multiple sources such as friends and colleagues, books and online sources while online information and face-to-face were the two most preferred. Further, Fiedler, Lash, Wong and Tiainen (2006) established that individuals can seek information from a variety of sources and these sources convey information in a variety of ways. These include peers, superiors, experienced coworkers, subordinates, among others.

In order to find out the level of ease associated with information access of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities, the respondents were asked to answer using the scale made available to them. This information is presented in table 5.

Table 5: Level of Ease Associated with Information Access of Senior Non-academic Staff in Nigerian Universities

S/N	STATEMENT	VE	E	SE	NE	MEAN	STD.D
1	Colleagues in my office	359 (28.2)	610 (48.1)	183 (14.4)	104 (8.2)	2.94	.92
2	Peers in my office	381 (30.0)	512 (40.3)	269 (21.2)	37 (2.9)	2.86	1.06
3	Subordinates in my office	426 (33.5)	459 (36.1)	228 (18.0)	90 (7.1)	2.85	1.12
4	Superiors in my office	370 (29.0)	439 (34.6)	358 (28.3)	103 (8.1)	2.85	.94
5	Print materials (books, journals, etc.)	483 (38.0)	291 (22.8)	287 (22.7)	209 (16.6)	2.82	1.11
6	Library	495 (38.8)	279 (22.0)	261 (20.6)	219 (17.3)	2.80	1.17
7	Radio	308 (24.2)	575 (45.2)	159 (12.5)	204 (16.1)	2.74	1.06
8	Online (internet, CD-ROMs, etc.)	454 (35.8)	330 (26.0)	203 (16.0)	254 (20.0)	2.73	1.20
9	Television	302 (23.8)	473 (37.2)	382 (30.1)	54 (4.3)	2.73	.95
10	Superiors outside my office	351 (27.7)	408 (32.0)	381 (30.1)	54 (4.3)	2.71	1.10
11	Colleagues outside my office	311 (24.5)	536 (42.1)	238 (18.8)	71 (5.6)	2.68	1.17
12	Policy papers	296 (23.3)	371 (29.2)	481 (37.9)	106 (8.4)	2.65	.97
13	Peers outside my office	270 (21.3)	425 (33.4)	393 (31.0)	97 (7.6)	2.55	1.11

14	Subordinates outside my office	240 (18.9)	462 (36.2)	319 (25.2)	135 (10.7)	2.46	1.18
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Table 5, shows that majority of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities, find it easy accessing information from colleagues in the office, peers in the office, subordinates and superiors in the office. This result implies that people prefer consulting first, those that are closest to them. This could be associated with proximity as a factor for information seeking. Uga (2008) established that readers tend to use information sources that require least effort to access. Adeoye and Popoola (2011) also established that users tend to use available and accessible resources that will meet their information needs. On the other hand, it could be alarming and worrisome if it is as a result of lack of retrieval skill. Because lack of skill of access to information from various and available sources will hinder its usage thereby affecting decisions making and other activities negatively. It is important that users of information have the ability and skills necessary to be able to access and retrieve information from different sources.

Table 6: Showing Perceived Influence of Information Use on Job Performance of Senior Non-Academic Staff

S/N	STATEMENT	S.A.	A	S.D.	D.	MEAN	STD.D
1	Being in possession of information helps me to contribute meaningfully during group discussions	370 (29.1)	502 (39.5)	204 (16.1)	172 (13.5)	2.81	1.06
2	I easily pass on information to my co-workers that will help them to perform their work effectively	370 (29.1)	502 (39.5)	204 (16.1)	172 (13.5)	2.81	1.06
3	The use of information helps me in ensuring that jobs within areas of specific responsibilities are completed in a timely manner and within budget	302 (23.8)	445 (35.0)	418 (32.9)	89 (7.0)	2.73	.94
4	Information use helps me in creative thinking	316 (24.9)	406 (32.0)	440 (34.6)	108 (8.5)	2.73	.93
5	Information use help me to exercise good judgments by making sound and well informed decisions	381 (30.0)	287 (22.6)	404 (31.8)	121 (9.5)	2.73	.93
6	Having information helps me to consider and respond appropriately to the needs and feelings	268 (21.1)	471 (37.1)	437 (34.4)	78 (6.1)	2.71	.91

	of different people in different situations						
7	With the help of information, I come up with unique ideas	223 (17.3)	552 (43.5)	389 (30.6)	106 (8.3)	2.70	.85
8	Information use helps me to adapt and work with others	223 (17.6)	501 (39.4)	474 (37.3)	56 (4.4)	2.68	.86
9	With information, I encourage employees in my department to participate in deciding how to the work gets done.	347 (27.3)	373 (39.4)	357 (38.1)	177 (13.9)	2.68	1.06
10	Information use helps me to put in more than I am required to do	232 (18.3)	569 (44.8)	268 (21.1)	185 (14.6)	2.64	.98
11	With information, I perform difficult tasks	145 (11.4)	606 (47.7)	400 (31.5)	97 (7.6)	2.59	.85
12	Having information helps me to solve problems by negotiating/discussing with colleagues	227 (17.6)	461 (36.3)	454 (35.7)	59 (4.6)	2.57	1.01
13	Information use helps me in ensuring that work output is of quality and quantity	355 (28.0)	308 (24.3)	353 (27.8)	185 (14.6)	2.55	1.19
14	Information use helps me to perform technical (professional) tasks	224 (17.6)	412 (32.4)	460 (36.2)	97 (7.6)	2.48	1.06

Table 6 presents the perceived information use on job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities. With all the mean score approximated to 3, it shows that being in possession of information helps the respondents to contribute meaningfully during group discussions; senior non-academic staff easily pass on information to their co-workers that will help them to perform their work effectively with mean scores of (mean = 2.81) respectively. This is closely followed by the use of information helps me in ensuring that job within areas of specific responsibilities are completed in a timely manner and within budget, information use helps me in creative thinking, and information use help me to exercise good judgments by making sound and well informed decisions with the mean scores of (2.73) respectively and so on.

The reason for senior non-academic staff use of information is not far-fetched. Popoola (2007) attests that managers who use information are likely to be fast trackers as they set pace for their team and peers and productivity is greatly enhanced when information is used in job performance. Haliso and Okunfulure (2010) also established in their study that there is significant relationship between information use and job

performance. Hwang, Kettinger and Yi (2010) and Davenport, De Long and Hwang (2011) believe that employee's use of information motivates and influences job performance.

In an attempt to find out the relationship that exist between information sources used and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities, the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant relationship between information sources used and job performance" was formulated. This is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Relationship between Information Sources Used and Job Performance

Variables	N	Mean	Std. D	R	Sig.	Remark
Information sources use	1270	34.69	5.61	.156	.000	significant
Job performance	1270	71.46	9.81			

Table 7 shows that there is a significant relationship between information sources used and the job performance of senior non-academic staff of Nigerian universities ($r = 0.156$; $P < 0.05$). Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected. The positive relationship indicates that there is tendency that types of information sources used brings about increase in job performance. This is the reason senior non-academic staff should avail the time to seek and use information from different sources that enhance their jobs. This finding collaborate with Kumar and Kaur (2005) who attests that that adequate flow of information would enhance human productivity and eradicate inefficiency among individuals and organizations.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study made effort to investigate the information use and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities. The study established various sources of information utilized by senior non-academic staff of Nigerian universities, also a positive

influence and relationship was found to exist between information sources used and job performance of senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities. The study therefore recommended provision and/or extension of current awareness as well as selective dissemination of information to senior non-academic staff by information professionals specifically, librarians. Hence this will avail them the opportunity of having access to regular, current and job related information for their day to day activities. This will also motivate senior non-academic staff to seek and make regular use of different information sources.

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